BOOK NOTES

Published posthumously is William Barclay's *Great Themes of the New Testament,* wherein he takes six key passages of scripture and deals with them both in depth and practicality, emphasizing as he does, not only what they meant then but what they mean to us now. One of these is Acts 2, "The First Christian Sermon," which has some surprises for the readers of this journal. 5.45 postpaid.

One of the most challenging things I have read lately is John A. T. Robinson's *Wrestling with Romans,* which is well named since the author admittedly struggles for what he can never quite master. He seeks to move in between a commentary and a devotional. His treatment of chapters 9-11 is most interesting, but he finds the eighth chapter the plateau. If you have written this man off as a radial liberal, you need to read this book. 6.45 postpaid.

One of the greatest works ever composed on New Testament times and background is Edersheim's *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah.* Its value can hardly be overstated, and one can spend a lifetime studying it. It is now available in a two-volumes-in-one edition for only 14.95 postpaid.

Now available at 7.95 in English is H. J. Schoeps" *Paul,* which is a study of the theology of the apostle in the light of Jewish religious thought of his time. There is, for instance a 60-page treatment on Paul's view of the law. This one is for the more serious student, and yet it is readable enough for any of us.

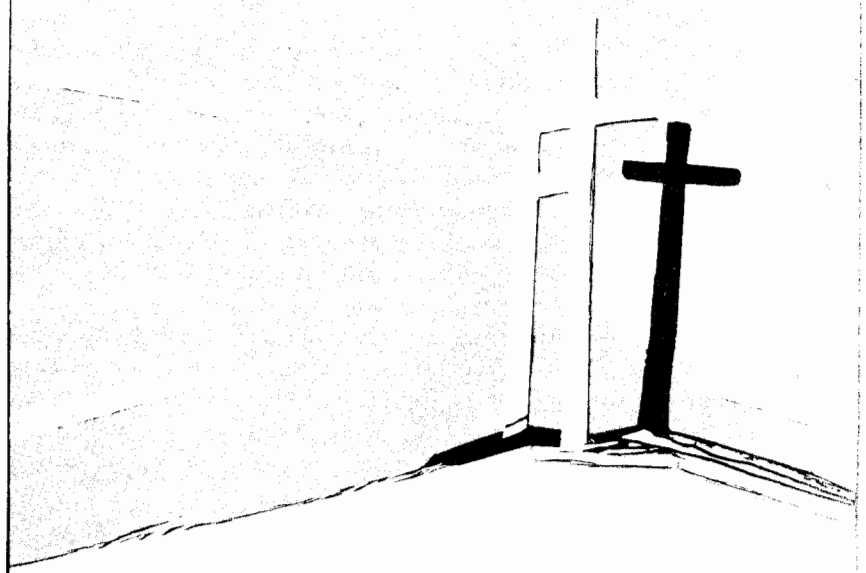
There is still interest in Restoration history. To those eager to strengthen your library with the most important sources, we recommend: *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell* by Robert Richardson (17.95); *The Fool of God,* a novel based on life of Campbell (3.50); *Life of Walter Scott,* who was the great evangelist of the early period, and *Biography of J. T. Johnson,* a pioneeer preacher whose life was fabulously interesting (7:00 each).

At least some Mormon elders are having to confront the convincing evidence set forth in *The Mormon Papers,* which questions the reliability of their Bible, for we keep selling them. The new stock is still only 3.45 counting postage.

Vincent's *Word Studies* is another old classic that we are making available. An ideal gift for someone special who has interest in the deeper meaning of scripture. The four volume set is 29.50, postpaid.

We issued a special insert for this number for this particular geographical area so as to advertise Carl Ketcherside's visit to Denton, which starts the evening of Dec. 2 with "The Coming Reformation" and ends Dec. 5 with "The Divine Dynamic" in the event we missed some of you close enough to attend, 7:30 each evening. We reminded the people in this area that they had heard *about* this man and that now they should exercise their freedom to think for themselves and hear the man himself. We here in Denton do not believe that *all* people are like "dumb driven cattle," as the poet puts it, and that there are always some who will listen — especially when they are told not to!

RESTORATION REVIEW



But who is a Christian? I answer, Every one that believes in his heart that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the Son of God; repents of his sins, and obeys him in all things according to *his* measure of knowledge of his will. — *Alexander Campbell in the Lunenburg Letter*

Vol. 21, No. 9 Leroy Garrett, Editor November 1979

Blessed are the Peacemakers . . .

THE GOD OF PEACE

While we do not usually see the creator and ruler of the universe as *the God of peace,* it was a favorite expression of the apostle Paul. At least five times in his letters he refers to "the God of peace," and more often still he writes of the peace of God, or peace from God, or peace with God. Once (2 Thess. 3:16) he uses "the Lord of peace, and once (2 Cor. 13:11) "the God of love and peace."

The idea is that God and only God is the *source* of peace. *Today's English Version* chooses to translate it that way: "And God, our source of peace, will soon crush Satan under your feet" (Rom. 16:20), or in a slightly different way: "And the God who gives us peace will be with you" (Philip. 4:9).

The true believer knows better than to rely on false sources of peace. So Jesus taught his diciples: "Peace is what I leave with you; it is my own peace that I give you. I do not give it as the world gives" (Jn. 14:27). *Not as the world gives!* What does that mean? There is a peace that the world can and does give, but it is a false peace. Jesus means that the world simply does not have the peace to give that he has. The world can give wealth, prestige, position, fame, applause, and even financial security (of sorts), but not peace. It is God who gives peace, and this is far more than serenity of mind. The peace of God is God's own presence in our lives. The essence of peace is fellowship with God.

This is why Jesus goes on to say: "I have said this to you so that in me you may have peace" (Jn. 16:33). Peace means that God is with us, making his home within us, through Jesus Christ. The Lord draws the contrast in his next statement: *In the world you have tribulation.* Then he says, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." That is really Good News. In this world there is no way to cut it, even when we live in the world's most blessed nation. Frustration, anxiety, boredom, and meaninglessness seek outlets in drugs, sex binges, alcoholism, and an hedonism that makes pleasure-seeking a religion. The world can provide noise but not peace. It can give anesthetics but not peace. It can retire you on a pension and Social Security but it cannot give you fellowship with God. It may in fact deny you of God's presence in your life by its false security.

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In the world you have tribulation. It is futile to expect it to be any other way. The world will give us trouble. The true believer will never quite belong because she will not accept the world's values. *Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world.* This means that we do not have to look to the world and all its false values. In Jesus we have the peace that comes from God.

Part of the bill of goods that the world would sell us is that life is a struggle to hold one's own with our fellows, to achieve moderate comfort during a few working years, and then to retire with reasonable security for the few years that remain. The fallacy led Shakespeare to say, "Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale, Vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man."

Yet man feels that somewhere, somehow there is a life worth living, a life that bears fruit of lasting value. The believer sees this, not in terms of universal prosperity and general peace of mind, but in Jesus Christ, who stands before us as the embodiment of the ideal life, showing us what creative, self-giving love can be. The life worth living is the life of peace, one ruled by the ideal that Jesus provides and motivated by the dynamic that only he can give.

This life of peace, finding its source in God, will grow into greater and greater riches as it surrenders itself more and more to the likeness of Christ, *living for others, serving others.* This is the peace that passes all understanding, and which the world can neither know nor give.

A religion of fear and uncertainity cannot really appreciate *the God of peace.* It rather finds its motivation in *the God of wrath,* and herein lies its false security. The scriptures are replete with the wrath of God, but this applies to those who refuse to acknowledge God, while the Christian takes refuge in the assurance that he has not been appointed unto wrath (1 Thess. 5:9). Our people have moved in company with the God of wrath long enough. Now that heaven has made us "sons and daughters of peace" (Lk. 10:6) let us really get acquainted with our Father who is the God of peace.

The idea of God's wrath impressed me when I was a child. I recall getting caught in a storm, far from home, when I ran like mad, pulling my little red wagon behind me, stopping at least once to kneel and pray, imploring God to help me along to where mother was. The more the lightning flashed and the thunder peeled the faster I ran, refusing to forsake my wagon, which bounced along behind me. I was not sure whether God was with me or after me!

As we become mature in the faith we should lay aside childish ways of believing. Yet many of us behave as if God might be against us as much as he is for us. God is *for* man, Karl Barth used to say, believing this to be the message of the Bible. If he is for man in general, he is for the elect of God in a special way. He makes them peacemakers, envoys of the God of peace, who calls all men to peace.

God makes peace by breaking down walls, and that is how we make peace. Paul tells us all about it: "Christ himself is our peace by making Jews and Gentiles one people. With his own body he broke down the wall that separated them and kept them enemies" (Eph. 2:14).

Parties build walls. Jesus removes walls. Parties make men and women enemies. Jesus makes them friends.

If we are to be peacemakers, we may well have to choose between Christ and a party. On which side is *the God of peace? — the Editor*

To Church of Christ Leaders . . .

PRIESTS INSTEAD OF PROPHETS?

I am persuaded by substantial evidence that many, if not most, of our leaders among Churches of Christ basically agree with the things this journal advocates, but they do not let this be known. When I refer to our leaders I mean:

Editors of our leading journals.

Administrators and professors in our colleges, and this would include at least a few of the teachers in the schools of preaching.

Elders and deacons in our churches, and Sunday School teachers.

Ministers in pulpits across the land, including the largest and most influencial churches.

I do not, of course, mean that *all* those in these various categories are in agreement with what we are pleading for, but that a substantial number are. I could easily name scores of such ones, and there are others that I hear from that could name even more. It is a case of our leadership being less than candid and forthright with our people, withholding what they really believe, even allowing, if not encouraging, criticism against those of us who are standing up for what they themselves would teach if they would reveal their true thinking.

To be more specific about the things I am referring to I would list especially:

1. The notion that what we call "The Church of Christ" is the one and only true church.

2. The idea that we are the only Christians, and that there are no Christians among what we insensitively label as "the sects."

3. The assumption that *we* and only we have restored the church of the New Testament, that we have arrived and have all the truth.

4. The belief that instrumental music is *per se* a sin and that all who use it are sinning and going to hell.

5. The idea that fellowship must be restricted to those who are "right" on all the vital issues, that we cannot not only have fellowship with "brothers in error," but with no one in the denominations, not even with our sisters and brothers in the Christian Church.

The list could be extended to include our contention that we have been legalistic about baptism and remiss regarding the place of grace, that we have well nigh ignored the mission of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer and that we have been too legalistic and patternistic in our view of the scriptures and the primitive church.

So, mark well what I am saying. Even though scorn has been heaped upon me and others for insisting that neither the scriptures nor our own Restoration heritage demand that we think of ourselves as the only Christians or that we must make instrumental music a test of fellowship, these men are really "closet" advocates of the same ideas. They too believe that we should fellowship all those who are in Christ, certainly those among Christian Churches, and not just our own folk, but they are slow of heart to state their convictions.

This was brought home to me recently while visiting with an old warrior among us who has long since come out of the closet, if ever he was in it. Having once been in the administration of one of our colleges, he knows the people that I am talking about better than I. When I revealed to him my suspicion that these leaders actually agree with what we are saying, he reinforced the idea with an unequivocal *I know they do!* He proceeded to list the men by name, from Tennessee to Texas to California. I knew every one he named and had long since decided that they were being less than honest with their readers and auditors about what they really believed. The old warhorse, who himself has suffered for his transparency, told of instances when some of these leaders revealed their true position to him personally, explaining that they were not able to say such things publicly lest they jeopardize their position in the brotherhood.

So I could name the men I have in mind, just as this brother did, and at one time decided that this article would be an "Open Letter" to these men, wherein they would be addressed by name, pleading for them to speak out, for I think I know they could speak their true convictions and get by with it, *now* at least, if not a decade ago. But I decided against that approach. I do not want it to appear that I am after somebody.

The evidence that I have has accumulated through the years from various sources, such as reports from private conversations. An example of

what I mean is a conversation between some college faculty people and the president of the college. Effort was being made to bring Carl Ketcherside to the campus. The president was asked point blank, *Is Ketcherside right?* His reply was to the effect that Carl was right, but that he had a college to promote, which he could not do by having the likes of Ketcherside around. He was, at least in that moment, candid.

Another example is when one enterprising brother sent one of Carl Ketcherside's articles to one of our prominent editors for publication, but with the author's name deleted. The editor wrote back, commended the article, and requested the identity of the author so that he could give proper credit. The brother, knowing that this editor had again and again refused to publish anything by Carl, knew better than to carry the matter further.

When I mentioned Carl to the old warhorse referred to above, he said, *They all know Carl is right, but they will not dare allow him to be heard, and what a tragedy since he is so articulate.* Then he said, *They are priests, not prophets,* and that really puts the finger on the problem if not on them.

But I must add our favorite story, the one that delights Ouida, and it came to us directly from the one who did the fiendish thing, a teacher at a Bible Chair at a Texas university. Placing a *Mission Messenger,* then edited by Carl Ketcherside, inside a *Firm Foundation,* he went to the office of his director, telling him he wanted to read him something. So he read from Carl out of the open *Firm Foundation,* which is one way to get into that journal that Carl overlooked. The director was absolutely delighted, wondering what had gotten into the *Foundation,* publishing such vital stuff as that. *Who wrote that?,* asked the director, elated that the powers that be were at last speaking out. The teacher then laid his evil contrivance before him on the desk and burned him with *Carl Ketcherside!*

No wonder the lad was eventually on the outside looking in. After all, there is a limit to which you should go in making folk look like fools. I would have fired him too! But you should hear Ouida tell that story. She thinks it reveals so much about what has happened to us. We have actually reached the place where we will reject *truth* — if it is the wrong one who speaks it! What kind of love for truth is that? It looks as if the love of *party* come first.

Priests rather than prophets! It may be so. The priests throughout biblical history have been inclined to preserve the *status quo* and resist change. Serving at the altar, they have often resisted the prophet's call for reform, and it was they that contrived the conspiracy against the greatest reformer of them all, the Christ himself. As interpreters of the law and the monitors of the ritual, they stood closer to the people and were in a position to "poison the well" when the prophet called for repentance. God assured Jeremiah that he could count on the opposition of the priests, but that he would give him the strength to resist them (Jer. 1:18). The prophets called on

the priests to judge righteously and to teach faithfully, but it often fell upon deaf ears (Hos. 5:1, Mal. 2:7). Zech. 7:6 complains that they acted for their own satisfaction and Micah 3:11 judges them for ministering for hire. It is true that the faithful prophets were equally critical of false prophets, but it was usually the priests that stood in the way of reform, and so the prophets are always bidding them to hearken to the voice of God and mourn over their sin of neglect.

There is mystery to the evil we are describing, for we are talking about good men who love the Lord and the church, and who believe they are pursuing the right course in *taking it easy.* They tell my old friend that this is not the time, or that if they say too much they will jeopardize their opportunity to bring about the changes we all desire. They want to be *in* and not *out,* for it is only from the inside that change can be effected. They do not want to endanger their standing, their position, for then their opportunity will be gone. They want to say what others of us are saying but in their own way and own time.

I do not quarrel with this, for each must do his own thing in his own way before his own Lord. But as my friend said, speaking from long years of experience, *They never get around to saying it, or if they do it is so veiled that no one gets the point.* Theirs is not the prophetic voice, calling for changes that they know are long past due.

Some of us have the right to ask, *What kind of leadership is that?* We call for robust honesty, transparency, vulnerability, moral courage. They *could* get by with laying it all out before our people, for they have ripened for the change and would follow courageous leadership. But this is hardly the right motive. Suppose the prophets had waited until it was safe to speak out? Suppose our Lord had been careful to protect his "position" and had waited for the opportune time? Have we no understanding in leading God's church to what it means to be a disciple of the humble Galilean who was committed to pleasing his Father rather than the people.

If we are true makers of peace, followers of Jesus rather than the party, there is no way for us to be invulnerable. We must be willing to get hurt, and that will almost certainly happen. For the few who have their values in proper perspective, and who have discovered what is really important over what is but trivial, the decision is by no means a difficult one. — *the Editor.*

There are persons in the Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches who were baptized to obey God rather than to please the sects. In this they rise above the sectarian spirit, despite the parties in which they find themselves. They ought to get out of the sectarian churches, but they see so much sectarianism in the nonsectarian churches that they think they are all alike. — — *David Lipscomb,* Questions Answered, p. 592

Highlights in Restoration History . . .

ARE WE TO COOPERATE WITH OTHERS?

The Central Church of Christ in Irving, Texas has come under lots of fire lately because of its decision to join the Dallas Area Community of Churches, which enables them to cooperate with other believers in ministering to suffering humanity. They have been berated as disloyal, apostate, and forsaking the old paths for taking such a step, both from our pulpits and in several journals. In the meantime their numbers increase and they have heard from many people all over the country, commending them for their stand.

One journal accused Central of forsaking our historic heritage, which moved me to write the following to the editor, which will be our short history lesson for this month. — *the Editor*

To the Gospel Advocate:

I just now read your comments on the news item about the Central Church of Christ in Irving in which you invite us readers to weep as well as read. You deem it tragic that they have joined a community of churches for the sake of rendering various ministries of mercy, and I note in particular that you indicate that this is contrary to the practices and principles held to by our forebears — "so long withstood with valor by our fathers" as you put it.

If this is something new for the Churches of Christ in general and the Dallas County churches in particular, it is hardly new when our history is viewed as a whole.

You will remember that when Thomas Campbell was forced to break with the Presbyterians and finally started the Brush Run Church, which he called "a church of Christ," the first thing he did was to seek membership in an association of Presbyterian churches. When they turned him down, he joined the Redstone Baptist Association of Churches. When this association gave Alexander Campbell some difficulty over such things as his Sermon on the Law, he solved the problem by joining in the effort of their second church in Wellsburg, Virginia. And one of the first things that the new church did was to join the Mahoning Baptist Association, which eventually became the nucleus for the Campbell movement.

As we read such history are we to weep? Was this wrong for them? It never occurred to them that they were compromising any truth through such association or that it meant an endorsement of any error. In fact the Brush Run church had it clearly understood that they were to be free to do their own thing and be their kind of church. As I understand it, this is the situation with the cooperative effort in Dallas: each church preserves its own authenticity, they share a common faith in Jesus as Lord, and cooperate in reaching out to the needy. What could possibly be wrong with this? I say we should rejoice rather than weep.

What our pioneers did in those earliest churches was continued in various ways. Campbell often spoke in the denominational churches, and the ministers of various persuasions were visitors in his home and at the Bethany church. He cooperated with the denominations in translating and publishing the Bible and was a supporter of Bible societies. There is one reference in his travel notes of assembling with the Episcopalians when there was not a congregation of his own. He thought nothing of this and even spoke of "other denominations" with respect and appreciation.

Old John T. Johnson, who was probably our greatest evangelist, was as much this way as Campbell, especially in cooperating with other churches in the Bible Union movement. It had not occurred to me that I should weep over such things. Must we go it alone and be an isolated, exclusivistic folk that presumes to be right while everyone else is wrong? If we must, it is here that we should weep.

NEEDED: LADIES' BIBLE CLASS

(One for men, that is!)

There are those times when a light-hearted, passing remark really says something. That was the case recently at our assembly here in Denton when one of our sisters, telling me about our church's ladies' Bible class, said: "What our men need is a good ladies' Bible class!"

I had asked the sister what they had studied at their last session (They do it all themselves, no men), and she told me that they never got around to their planned lesson. "We prayed the entire two hours," she told me, as a matter of fact. Jesting with her somewhat, as I often do, I chided her for praying so much. "What on earth do you have to pray about that takes two hours?," I complained, knowing full well that I was talking about the most prayer-conscious group that I've ever known among Churches of Christ.

That is when she nailed me with what I already knew all too well. *You men need a good ladies Bible class!* That was her way of saying that we men need to pray much, much more than we do. We *never* let prayer interfere with our Bible study. In fact prayer, which we of course believe in, is rather perfunctorily disposed of and we get down to what really matters, the lesson at hand. Anybody knows that you pray for a few minutes and then study an hour. That is the way we've always done it. But not the sisters — not *those* sisters here in Denton, Texas. If the needs at hand call for it, they pray and keep on praying.

"What were you praying about?," I asked again. *For our husbands!*, she answered laying it on just a little. I am still hearing her, as the British say, and I have to concede that we men in the congregation do not really know much about how to pray, or so it seems. Nor are we as spiritual as we should be. We need somebody to pray for us! As an elder in our congregation I am much concerned that we restore the altar to the home where "the priestly father," to quote Burns, opens the sacred Book and teaches his children, and where the mother demonstrates that it is the quiet and gentle spirit that is of great price in the sight of God. Children read our values better than we think, and they are not deceived into what we *really* consider important. They see that our values are what we give our time and attention to.

When our sisters pray for two hours at a time, it is prayer in the broader sense. They share their problems with each other, and they discuss the needs of others. They receive prayer requests from far and wide, and some women come because they know their needs will be heard and they will be prayed for. Sitting in a circle, each lady is free to say what she will, to lay bare her soul, and even to weep if she wants to. That is how they spend hours praying. They are thinking of dividing into two groups so they can meet still more needs and pray still more. Moreover, some of them go into homes and pray for people who are hurting.

Do not all of our churches need this kind of ladies' Bible class, especially for the men! — *The Editor*

I rejoice to know and feel that I have the good wishes, the prayers, and the hopes of myriads of Christians in all denominations. — *Alexander Campbell,* just before his debate with Robert Owen, infidel, 1829.

While we condemn others for having a standard other than the Scriptures, we make our own interpretations a standard if we are not very careful. — *Reuel Lemmons,* Firm Foundation, Oct. 30, 1979

Something Special for Denton

December 2-5

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Robert Owen, infidel, 1829.

While we condemn others fc
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Foundation, Oct. 30, 1979

. . . To Be "Christians Only."

Our dream is to be "Christians only," but not the only Christians.

. . . To Be A Family.

We are not so much a "church" as a family. We have been drawn together by our mutual trust in Jesus. He is the center of our faith. His will is our guide.

. . . To Make Our Coming Together Vital and Uplifting.

We find this strength in singing, in celebrating the Lord's Table, in proclaiming the Lordship of Christ, and in sharing needs with prayers. We believe the "Good News" is a message of joy.

. . . To Grow In Understanding God's Will.

We look to the Bible as our guide both for our personal lives and for our life together.

. . . To Share God's Message With One Another.

We have no priest, clergyman or professional minister to preach to you. When you attend you might hear a teacher, a lawyer, a university student, a pilot, a business man, a computer-programmer, a roofer, or a doctor. These are men who make their living by going off to work each day as you do. Our dream is that every Christian be a minister!

. . . To Serve Our Community.

We want to go beyond taking care of the needs of our own. We want to serve the community of Denton in as many ways as there are gifts among us. Sharing and serving are our watchwords!

Church of Christ at Denton
Christian Fellowship Center
1028 Welch St.
Denton, Texas 76201

Pilgrimage of Joy . . . No. 39

OUR ENDURING HERITAGE

W. Carl Ketcherside

Henry David Thoreau wrote, "Only that traveling is good which reveals to me the value of things at home, and enables me to enjoy them better." it was in 1964 we built our new house, and moved into it shortly before Thanksgiving Day. It was five minutes from the air terminal and Nell could drop me off there, and come and get me on my return without ever going to the public parking lot. The house was designed to enable us to handle the paper and my books, and proved to be ideal for our need.

And we needed something to make travel more convenient. During the year, among many other places I spoke at Milligan College; at the Bond County Fellowship Meeting at Mulberry Grove, Illinois; at the alumni meeting at Lincoln Christian College; at the Southern Illinois Christian Convention; at Roanoke Bible College, in Elizabeth City, North Carolina; at the Tri-State Fellowship in Weirton, W. Va.; at the Statewide Fellowship Meeting at Boise, Idaho; at the Statewide Rally at Little Rock, Arkansas; at Ozark Bible College, Joplin, Missouri; at the Fellowship Forum, Casper, Wyoming; at the Arizona Christian Convention, at Phoenix; and at Oregon State Christian Convention, at Turner, Oregon. This was but a little of my travels during the year.

In the meeting at Milligan College, I first came in contact with Dr. Robert Burns, and liked him from the start. I had corresponded with him many times but it was a great privilege to know him personally. At the time he was minister for the great Peachtree Christian Church in Atlanta and a genial gentleman.

Present with us also was Dr. James DeForest Murch, of Silver Springs, Maryland. He knew the history of the restoration movement like few others I have ever met. He had just edited a history of it called *Christians Only.* He had always been intensely interested in unity as evident in the Witty-Murch discussions. He was a co-founder of the National Association of Evangelicals, and editor of their journal *United Evangelical Action.* He was founder and president of the National Sunday School Association, the National Association of Religious Broadcasters, and the Evangelical Press Association. He was also managing editor of *Christianity Today.* He was author and composer of the song "I'll Put Jesus First in My Life." We began a great friendship which lasted until his death, and the times he spent in our home meant much to me.

On March 4, 1964, Harvey Bream and I met in a 3½ hour public conference with Dr. Clyde Funkhouser, District Superintendent of the Methodist Church, at Fairfield, Illinois. The subject was "Current Views on

Christian Unity." Harvey was editor of *The Restoration Herald* but has since become president of Cincinnati Bible College. The encounter was great and confirmed me in the belief that we needed to cross over lines for dialogue.

It was about this time I formulated a policy with reference to other journals. I was under attack from some of them in every issue. I was being called a heretic, a Judas Iscariot, a Benedict Arnold, a compromiser, and a liberal. It was not popular in those days to affirm that every child of God in the world was your brother. So I simply resolved to mention the various papers and urge my readers to send for a copy and read what was being said about me for themselves. It proved to be a good method of dealing with the situation and I pursued it as long as I continued to publish. It was about this time someone sent me a little motto which read: "Love Your Enemies, It Drives Them Nuts."

During this year Leroy Garrett made a monthly out of his paper which had previously been edited as a quarterly. This gave him the opportunity to write articles which were geared more closely to the times. The result was a great increase in the number of subscriptions. The paper has been a monthly ever since and has accomplished profound good. Leroy has never been free from attack, much of it unprincipled, but his patience and tolerance, have turned this to great growth. The paper you now hold in your hand is an indication of what has been accomplished to the glory of our Lord.

The following year, 1965, brought three things to pass which were of note in my life. First, I was invited to speak at the World Convention of Churches of Christ, in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The World Convention was begun by Jesse M. Bader, to provide a chance for the varying restoration groups to meet together and listen to one another. The first one was held in Washington, D.C., in October, 1930. There were more than 9,000 present.

I was the first participant from the non-instrument group who had ever been present. When I arrived in San Juan, there were 6000 people present from 32 countries. The evening meetings were held at Herman Bithorn Stadium on the outskirts of town. Buses were used to transport people to the place and back to the hotels. The address of welcome was made by Florentino Santana, who was president. I was on the speaker's stand with Ray Blampied, president of the college at Dunedin in New Zealand, who was to be the first speaker. Brother Blampied's speech was characteristic of those who take a liberal theological approach to the sacred scriptures. It was apparent that many of the common folk did not like it very much.

Mine was entitled "Our Enduring Heritage" and my closing paragraph said, "Our enduring heritage! My entertainment in infancy, my instruction in youth, my inspiration in manhood, my invigoration in approaching age, my illumination on the coming journey through the valley of shadows! Oh, may I never forget it, but love it, revere it, and through it be faithful unto Him whose word it is. And amidst the clamor of disputed claims, the shouts of

sharply separated scientific scholars, and the propositions of antagonistic professors an pundits, may I never forget that it is better to know the Rock of ages than to know the ages of the rocks."

I was hardly prepared for what transpired. People from the Congo, from South America, and from Australia, pressed around me to shake my hand. They were thrilled to hear someone defend the Word as inspired of God and revealed from heaven. After my speech I was sought out by various ones who wanted to discuss the bearing of my remarks upon their national life and conduct. I began correspondence with some of them, and we continued to write to each other for years. It was as if God had arranged everything to His glory.

The next speaker after I finished was George R. Davis of National City Christian Church in Washington, D.C. He spent his entire time defending the president, Lyndon Johnson, who was a member of his congregation. The contrast in speeches was so great that a lot of brethren from other parts of the world were turned off. One of them said to me, "We came thousands of miles to hear about the Savior, and it is a new wrinkle to learn that his last name is Johnson."

The second thing which meant a lot to me was the study in depth conducted at Highland Church in Louisville, August 2-6. It was strangely successful, bringing together brethren from 12 states, 4 continents, and 6 segments of the restoration movement. Brethren affiliated with congregations which held the premillennial view were always intensely interested in souls. They had gone to the remotest parts of the earth with the message of life and had labored under great difficulties to tell the story of the cross. It was a blessing to have some of them in our audience.

The third thing which affected me was the cessation of the American Christian Review, after 110 years. This truly marked the end of an era. It did not make the impact it would have made if it had stopped a few years before. For a long time it had been simply picking up and reprinting older articles and it was no longer geared to the times. It had outlived its usefulness and was ready to die. But it brought a touch of nostalgia to me. It was the first religious paper I had ever seen. When I was a mere lad it came to our home. I used to lie flat of my stomach on the floor and read every word of it.

Brother Daniel Sommer was born of German immigrant parents in 1850. After a boyhood of poverty and hardship, he enrolled in Bethany College when he was nineteen years of age. On January 28, 1873 he married Katherine Way, daughter of Francis Way, an elderly Quaker. In 1886 he purchased the American Christian Review which had been started and printed by Benjamin Franklin, until his death near Anderson, Indiana, in the autumn of 1878. Brother Sommer changed its name to Octographic Review, in honor

of the eight writers of the new covenant scriptures. A great many of his humbler readers did not understand the meaning of the word "Octogaphic" so by the time I arrived on the scene it was changed again to Apostolic Review. Eventually, it was returned to its original title.

It was W. T. Moore who said, "The restoration movement does not have bishops — it has editors." For years our fate as a people was wrapped up with the Apostolic Review. Indianapolis was regarded as our headquarters, although anyone of us would have been quick to affirm that we had no earthly headquarters, but heaven was our home. Brother Sommer was a commanding figure. What he said was accepted as "law and gospel." When he read the Sand Creek Address and Declaration, and issued the ultimatum that those who persisted in the unscriptural clergy system, and in worldly ways of raising money for the support of the gospel, would no longer be regarded as brethren — that did it!

The fate of the Sommer family was our fate. When Sister Sommer became editor she debarred Daniel from writing and would not publish his material. Upon her death the editorship went to Chester and Bessie. D. Austen, who thought he should have been chosen, broke with them and started his own paper. It now became fashionable to speak with disrespect of the Review and with pride of the *Macedonian Call.* But editors have "feet of clay" and it was not long until D. Austen proved to be untrustworthy, as we saw it.

I am glad to be delivered from the unholy mess we created by our strife. But I want to see others also made free — free to love, to receive and to welcome all who are in Christ Jesus. Better times could come immediately if all of the papers among us would begin to urge upon us community instead of conformity. We will never see everything alike. If we did it would be but a short time until we differed about something else. What gain will come from calling for division where God has commanded peace?

Certainly, it would require an about-face. But what have we gained by pursuing the direction we have been going? Have we united the Christians in all of the sects? Have we brought peace to a body troubled with fighting? Is the heartache and bitterness, the hostility and hatred, to be our heritage to the bitter end? Will we continue to strike down every man who pleads with us to turn away the sword from shedding the blood of a brother?

Do not most of our division represent our faith in our opinions rather than in Jesus? Do they not exemplify our trust in our own infallibility. Do not the words of Oliver Cromwell apply to us today, "I beseech you, brethren, in the name of God, to consider that you may be mistaken." Are not there thousands upon earth who love Him as sincerely as we do, who revere His word and seek to follow in His path? What do we gain by giving them a shove instead of a helping hand? Shall we continue to shake our fist, rather than to wave our hand at a passing pilgrim?

Editors have gained too much power among us. They dominate our thinking. They determine our stand upon issues. They domineer in the realm of faith. And they make us pay for it. Let *us* choose wisely whom we shall follow.

A Crucial Difference . . .

BELIEVING IN JESUS AND BELIEVING JESUS

While reading recently in D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones' *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount,* a very provacative study indeed, I was impressed that the physician-turned-theologian would point to one idea that had influenced him more than any other. When he heard it from someone else, it set him to thinking as hardly anything else ever had. When an author is that turned on to an idea, I can hardly wait for him to tell me what it is, for if it meant that much to him it might to me.

This was the idea: *people who believe in Jesus may not really believe Jesus.* Lloyd-Jones figured that this applies to many in the modern church, who believe that Jesus is the Christ but do not believe what he said, especially in reference to the promises that he set before God's children. He was referring especially to Jesus' words: "So do not start worrying: 'Where will my food come from? or my drink? or my clothes?' (These are the things pagans are always concerned about.) Your Father in heaven knows that you need all these things. Instead, be concerned above everything else with the Kindom of God and with what he requires of you, and he will provide you with all these other things" (Matt. 6:31-33).

The doctor noted that one might believe in Jesus as the Son of God and still not believe *that* . We are slow of heart to believe what Jesus says. Even when he says that the Father *will* take care of us, we go right on worrying about what is going to happen to us, especially in these inflationary times of ours. Even some of us who have not yet missed a meal from want are anxious that the wolf will make his way to our door after all.

His promises are indeed many, and the apostle assures us that there is no uncertain *Yes* and *No* when it comes to Jesus: "He is the 'Yes' to all of God's promises" (2 Cor. 1:20). Paul goes on to say that that is why he can say a hearty *Amen* through Christ to the glory of God. Paul not only believed in Jesus but he also believed him. Peter must have also believed what Jesus said, for he described his promises as great and precious gifts, having the power to deliver us from the world's lusts and to make us partakers of the divine nature. One can't say much more than that about promises.

Jesus' promises should stud the canopy of our lives like diamonds in the sky. We remind ourselves of but a few.

He will come again (Jn. 14:3).

He will give us new bodies (Phil. 3:21).

He will fill us with his Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:16).

He will freely give us all things (Rom. 8:32).

He will do more than we can ask or even imagine (Eph. 3:20)

He will work for good in all the things that happen to us (Ro. 8:28).

He will give us the strength to endure any temptation or hardship (1 Cor. 10:13).

"I will never abandon you" (Heb. 13:5).

"My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Cor. 12:9).

We have only to believe. His grace does the rest. But to trust his grace is often too much for our sinful pride. We are our own worst enemy, getting in our own way. God asks for *us,* the whole of our being, but we can hardly turn loose. We have to do it for ourselves, at least in part. While we can hardly admit, we really suppose that we can direct our own way, though, of course, we would like for him to help us along.

Edward John Carnell in *The Case for Orthodox Theology* makes an important distinction between general faith and vital faith. General faith accepts the evidence that Jesus is the Christ, which we can see in the demons that believed and trembled. John 12:42 assures us that even some of the chief rulers believed on Jesus, but they would not confess him for fear of the Pharisees. This is general faith, which is belief in things or proposition or facts. Vital faith, on the other hand, is trust in a person. The difference is monumental, and when we look into the lives of those of us who profess faith in Jesus today, it is well to ask how much *vital* faith there really is.

We can believe in the Bible and all that it teaches, and even dedicate ourselves to a study of it, and still have only general faith. We can believe in the church and the facts of the gospel and still not have that faith that is *trust in a person,* vital faith. Vital faith calls for a commitment that reaches beyond the intellect into the intuitions of the heart. The meaning of the Bible might be grasped by the intellect alone, like geometry or physics; but the meaning of a person remains veiled until the intellect is joined by the yearnings of the heart.

Since this journal has long been concerned for the unity of all believers, it is well to ask in this context if we really believe what Jesus says about unity. It is rather absurd to think of the Churches of Christ today, where I have been nurtured, as *a unity movement,* which we still claim to be, however lamely. I can only conclude that our people do not *really* believe Jesus when he prayed to the Father about all believers being one. People who isolate themselves and have nothing to do with other Chritians, and label with epithets those who dare to venture into such fellowship, cannot expect

to be believed when they say they are interested in Christian unity.

For the moment let your mind's eye be fixed upon the praying Christ. Hear him as he prays to the Father about you and me, that we will be one, even as he and the Father are one, and that all believers everywhere will be united with us and we with them. In the shadow of the cross he prayed. Do we believe him? Was it an empty petition or but wishful thinking of an idealist? Did he pray in vain? Did the Father hear? Will the Father hearken? Will we go on and on like this, divided and sub-divided, as if Jesus never prayed that prayer?

If we really believe that prayer, we will do something about it. We too will pray that prayer, and we will open our hearts and lives in order to make it come true. We will look for signs of hope in every believer we meet, in every book we read, in every situation where we can serve as peacemaker. We may look for those signs even in a pope's visit. Jesus prayed that his disciples would love one another even as he loved them, and when that prayer is sufficiently answered the world will be won to God's story of love. If we believe it, we will be peacemakers, each in his own way, however insignificant it may be. We must behave as people who believe that Jesus' prayer for unity and love is being realized through them. Then our faith will be vital, not just general.

There is a great blessing in believing. "I will bless you," God said to Abraham, because the old patriarch believed what God said. "You did not withhold your own son from me." That faith made Abraham righteous. Therenever has been anything else that has made any person righteous before God except that person's faith. But it is real, vital, trusting faith in the Person, not simply in things about the Person. And God always blesses that kind of faith. — *the Editor.*

WHO IS MY BROTHER?

Dan Rogers, III

The title of this essay raises a question that needs to be seriously considered by every child of God today. I say this because it would seem that presently there are some brethren who do not always know a brother or sister in Christ when they see one!

Recently, someone provided me with a copy of a "church bulletin" in which its editor made a public reply to a personal letter he had received from another brother in Christ. The editor, who had been trying to provoke a debate with the other brother, stated in part: "From your letter you appear

to have apprehensions about it because you do not want to see 'two brothers' at each other's throats . . . We are not brothers in Christ!!! I do not consider a man who thinks instrumental music is scriptural and doesn't believe works has anything to do with salvation a brother!"

It would seem, from what he says, that this brother's criteria for determining brotherhood is conformity to his opinions. As such, if an individual conforms to his opinions on certain "major issues," he will "consider" that person to be his brother in Christ. On the other hand though, if an individual does not conform to his opinions on those "major issues," he will not "consider" that person to be his brother in Christ.

However, contrary to what this brother, as well as others, may think, the criteria for determining brotherhood is not conformity to one's opinions. Rather, brotherhood is determined by Fatherhood! Paul states in Galatians 3:26-29: "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you were united with Christ in baptism have been clothed with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." According to what Paul here states, all those who have been united with Christ in baptism, and as such have been clothed with Him, belong to Him, are all one in Him, and are *sons of God.* This means that those who are sons of God belong to the family of God, having God as their Father. Likewise it means that all those who have God as their Father are *brethren* in God's family. Thus, we indeed see that the criteria for determining brotherhood is Fatherhood.

As such, it really does not amount to a "hill of beans" in regard to whether or not I "consider" someone to be my brother in Christ. What I "consider" about the person has nothing to do with his relationship with God. If God is that person's Father, then that person is my brother, whether I "consider" him to be such or not and whether I like it or not!

Too, just as what I "consider" has nothing to do with whether or not one is my brother in Christ, so it is that our differences of opinion over the teachings of the Scriptures have nothing to do with the matter. If the individual has God as his Father, then he is my brother in Christ, even if we disagree over what one or both of us may be prone to regard as a "major issue."

Therefore, since the answer to our question is that my brother in Christ is anyone who has God as his Father, let us begin to acknowledge and treat our brethren as just that — BRETHREN! — *619 S. Chestnut, Marshfield, Mo. 65706*

Church of Christ, when used as a distinguishing name or denominational title, is just as unscriptural as Church of God when it is used by Pentecostals. — *G. C. Brewer,* Autobiography, p. 137

TOO FAR IN OR TOO FAR OUT?

George Massey

Sam Shoemaker describes the dilemma that faces each of us as we become deeply involved in an intimate fellowship in Christ:

I stand by the door.
I neither go too far in, nor stay too far out,
The door is the most important door in the world —
It is the door through which men walk when they find God.
There's no use my going way inside, and staying there,
When so many are still outside and they, as much as I,
Crave to know where the door is.
And all that so many ever find
Is only the wall where the door ought to be.
They creep along the wall like blind men,
With outstretched, groping hands;
Feeling for a door, knowing there must be a door,
Yet they never find it . . .
So I stand by the door.

Jesus stood close to the door. He stayed so close that his critics did not consider him a religious man. He did not enter into the accepted pious practices of his day. In fact, he moved outside the door and associated with the "untouchables" and those of "questionable character." Instead of fasting with the "religious", he feasted with "undesirables." He criticized the walls that piety had built to protect itself, and marched his motley crowd boldly to the door and into the Kingdom of God.

One of the walls that we build around us is the wall of our own "spirituality." It is a strange twist that the devout life can separate us from those outside. And if it separates us from those outside, it separates us from God. The door must remain important for those who have already entered. If we go to far in, or stay too long, we may forget the importance of the door. Secure within the walls, we spend our time climbing to new heights of "spirituality," by comparing our growth with those on the outside and with those "lesser lights" on the inside. It is a false security that moves too deeply inside and forgets where the door is.

The unique temptation of "renewal" churches is to focus exclusively on its new-found strength together, to move too deeply inside its own walls, and to stay too long. The greatest need in our life together is to stand by the door, and to go outside (but not too far out)! Let us say to all those in our community who are seeking for some meaning and purpose in their lives, that . . . *We stand by the door!*

— George Massey ministers to the Church of Christ at Denton in Denton, TX.